

What is Claimed is:

5 Sub A1
1. A method of performing a minimally invasive surgical procedure at a surgical site in a body, said method comprising:

providing a sealing device comprising a tube having a proximal end and a distal end, an inner bore and an outer surface, said proximal end having a larger outer diameter than said distal end, and an inflatable membrane disposed within said inner bore;

making an incision in the body;

inserting said sealing device through said incision; and

inflating said inflatable membrane.

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2. The method of claim 1 wherein said sealing device further comprises a fastening means on said outer surface of said tube.

15 3. The method of claim 2 wherein said fastening means comprises screw threads.

4. The method of claim 2 wherein said fastening means comprises circumferential ribs.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein said sealing device further comprises a plurality of protrusions extending from said outer surface of said tube.

5 6. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
insufflating the surgical site.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
inserting a surgical instrument through said sealing device and into the surgical site.

10 8. The method of claim 1 wherein said sealing device further comprises a plurality of protrusions extending inwardly from said inflatable membrane, said plurality of protrusions extending inwardly engaging one another to form a seal upon inflation.

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9. A method of performing a minimally invasive surgical procedure at a surgical site in a body, said method comprising:

20 providing a sealing device comprising a tube having a proximal end and a distal end, an inner bore and an outer surface, said proximal end having a larger outer diameter than said distal end, an inflatable membrane disposed within said inner bore, said inflatable membrane being adapted to completely fill said inner bore when inflated and to

leave an open lumen through said inner bore when deflated, and a plurality of protrusions extending from said outer surface of said tube;

making an incision in the body;

inserting said sealing device through said incision; and

inflating said inflatable membrane.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein said plurality of protrusions comprises screw threads.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein said plurality of protrusions comprises circumferential ribs.

12. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
insufflating the surgical site.

13. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
inserting a surgical instrument through said sealing device and into the surgical site.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein said sealing device further comprises a plurality of protrusions extending inwardly from said inflatable membrane, said plurality of protrusions extending inwardly engaging one another to form a seal upon inflation.

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